

Remarks at a Luncheon for Congressional Candidate Bob Beauprez in
Denver, Colorado
September 27, 2002

Thank you all. Nice to be out West. [Laughter] Thank you all for coming today. And “Congressman,” thank you for that kind introduction. Bob Beauprez is the right man to represent the State of Colorado. There is no question in my mind. I am proud to stand with him, and I hope the good folks of Colorado are wise enough to send him to Washington, DC.

I’m honored to be up here with Claudia, mother of four. These two folks love their family; they love their country. And Claudia, I appreciate you’re willing to sacrifice. See, moving out of Colorado is a pretty good size sacrifice. [Laughter] But like Bob, I married above myself. [Laughter] And my good wife sends her love and her best to our friends who are here, and to the Beauprezes in their quest of this high office—the Governor and the first lady of the State of Colorado. She sends her best, as do I.

By the way, she’s doing a fabulous job. She was down in Mexico representing the United States. She’s winging her way back to Crawford. I’m going to see her tonight after my trip. Tomorrow we’re going to spend a little quality time on the ranch, helping to make sure we maintain perspective, understanding that there’s life outside of the Beltway, that the values of central Texas and the values of the West out here in Denver are important values to keep a part of our spirit.

And so I’m honored to be here to campaign. She sends her love. By the way, she is doing a fabulous job. She is a great First Lady for America, and I’m really proud of her. Not bad for a west Texas girl who, when I married her, was a public school librarian who, frankly, didn’t care for politics and wasn’t too keen on politicians. [Laughter] She’s a great lady. She sends her love.

I also am honored to be here with your Governor. He is one of the Nation’s best Governors. Unlike some of them, he can run on his record. [Laughter] And it’s a record that’s going to put him back in office. And that’s good for Colorado. I’m honored Frances is here with him as well, a great first lady for the State of Colorado.

I want to thank the grassroots activists who are here. I want to thank Chairman Benson. I’ve known him for a long time. He’s a fine leader. I want to thank you for what you have done and what you’re going to do, and that is, you’re going to turn out the vote. You’re going to man the precincts. You’re going to do what you’re really good at, which is grassroots politics. And a lot of times you don’t get thanked enough. I’m here to thank you. I want to thank you for turning out the vote, not only to make sure the Governor wins and Bob wins but to make sure Wayne Allard goes back to the United States Senate.

I want to thank Senator Campbell for being here and the rest of the congressional delegation. You’ve sent some fine folks to Washington, DC, and I’ve enjoyed working with all of them. And I want to thank the folks who have organized this dinner—or lunch, however you want to call it. [Laughter] It’s a big crowd. Bob, it’s a good sign. See, the folks here know what I know—that you’re a man of principle, a man of character.

I love the Beauprez story. It’s an American story, really, when you think about it. It’s a Colorado story. It embodies the values of the State of Colorado and the best of America. After all, his grandfather came here penniless in 1910, left a wife and child behind. He wasn’t sure if he could make it in America. He came and worked hard. Had the honor of meeting Bob’s mom and

dad. One of them got out of the eighth grade. And the mom got a little farther in school: she got out of the ninth grade. But they're truly the American story, that hard work and dreaming big dreams and loving one another and raising your family means you can get ahead in America. Those are the values of Bob Beauprez, and they're important values for America to understand, and they're good values for the United States Congress.

I like to support a man who's made a living, who understands what it means to take risk, who's not only worked on a farm but has had a vision and saw that vision come to be. It's the kind of thinking we need in Washington, because we've got a problem with our economy. And here's the problem: Anytime somebody who wants to work can't find work, that's a problem. And even though there is economic growth, we don't have enough growth. And even though interest rates are low and inflation is low, the foundation for a growing economy—we need to do more.

But here's our attitude about the economy. The role of Government is not to create wealth; the role of Government is to create an environment in which the entrepreneur can flourish, in which the producer can make a living, in which the small business can grow to be a big business.

You're backing the right man for Congress. He understands how the economy works. He will join me and others in making sure the tax cuts which we passed are a permanent part of American life. There's an interesting debate in Washington about taxes; there always is. There's some who want more of your taxes in Washington; there are some who want less. I believe that when the economy slowed the way it was slowing when we came in, we needed to let people keep more of their own money. Here's the page of the textbook which we read. It says: "If you have more money in your pocket, it means you're more likely to demand a good or a service. And if you demand a good or a service

in the American system, somebody is going to produce the good or a service. And when somebody produces the good or a service, somebody is more likely to find work." The tax cuts came at the right time in American history.

The tax cuts stimulate economic growth. The tax cuts are good for small business creation. Small businesses create 70 percent of the new jobs in America. Most small businesses are not incorporated. Most small businesses are sole proprietorships or limited partnerships and, therefore, pay income taxes at the individual rates. And so when you drop the rates, you're encouraging capital creation in the small-business sector of America. Those who oppose tax cuts do not understand job creation and what the small-business community does for job creation.

It's hard for me to explain why we need to make them permanent. It's kind of—some of the things that happen in Washington: On the one hand, they taketh away; on the other hand, they giveth. In this case, we had tax reductions, but because of a rule in the United States Senate, those tax reductions cease after 10 years from the date of enactment. Congress gives, and then it takes away. And that's not right. What I need—I need allies in Washington who will make those tax reductions permanent so people can plan and save, and the job will grow.

And we did a good thing in that tax reduction plan. We sent the death tax on its way to extinction. The death tax is bad for Colorado ranchers. The death tax is bad for Colorado farmers. If you're interested in curtailing urban sprawl, you ought to eliminate the death tax, so people aren't forced to sell their farms and ranches when they don't want to, because of a bad tax. The death tax is bad for small businesses. The death tax is just plain bad. And this State and this district better send somebody to Washington who will vote to permanently repeal the death tax.

Economic vitality and economic growth means that we've got to manage our resources wisely, and we're not managing our forest resources wisely in America. We're allowing our forests to grow up like giant piles of kindling and just hoping that something doesn't happen. We're—backwards policy. We don't listen to the folks out West enough. We don't listen to the folks whose job it is to conserve our forests for future generations. The fires that have devastated the West should send a clear signal to not only the voters of this district but to the people in Washington, DC, that America, for the sake of our precious resources, and America, for the sake of future generations, must have forest policy based upon common sense. We must thin out our forests so that they're not giant piles of kindling for future national disasters.

Bob's commonsense approach makes sense for Colorado. He understands as well, when you're good at something, you ought to promote it. We're good at high-tech. We're good at growing crops. We're good at producing things, and we ought to be selling our products overseas. And so I appreciate that we're going to have a fellow free-trader elected to the United States Congress from this district. Trade is good for jobs. Trade is good for Colorado. And trade is good for America.

In order to create more jobs in America, Congress needs to act when it comes to terrorism insurance. There's some significant projects on hold because people can't get insurance because of what the terrorists did to us. It's estimated there's over 300,000 jobs that have been delayed, 300,000 hardhat, good, hard—good-paying jobs, because we can't get terrorism insurance. And Congress ought to act, and they need to move.

The problem is—well, here's the problem: Some of them are more interested in rewarding the trial lawyers than they are the hardhats. We need a bill that focuses—we need policy that focuses on the hard-working people, those people wearing the

hardhats. We've got to get them back to work. I need somebody up there who will join me in putting good, commonsense policy in place—people can find work in America. We want them working.

And one other thing I want to share with you about how to make sure the economy grows: We must be fiscally sound with your money; we cannot allow Congress to overspend. And here's the danger. Every idea in Washington sounds like a good idea. Everybody's idea sounds brilliant. And the problem in Washington politics is, every one of those brilliant ideas has got a price tag on them in the billions. And it begins to add up.

And the other danger is, there's no budget. Senator Armstrong remembers the days when the Senate had a budget. They don't have one now. And if you don't have a budget, guess what's likely to happen? People overspend. For the sake of job creation, for the sake of jobs, we need to make sure the United States Congress understands whose money they're spending. They're not spending the Government's money; they're spending your money. And I need fiscal conservatives, people who will protect your pocketbook in Washington, DC.

No, we're going to work together to make America a stronger place by making sure people can find work. Oh, I know there's a lot of talk about national security, and there should be, during these days. But part of making sure America is a secure place is that our economy is strong, and we continue to focus on job creation, which I'll do.

But my most important job these days is to protect the homeland, is to protect America against nothing but a bunch of coldblooded killers, protect our country against people who hate us because of what we love. They hate us because we love freedom. They hate us because we love the idea that people can worship an almighty God any way they see fit. They hate us because we speak our mind: we allow public discourse and dissent. They

hate us because we have a free press. And so long as we love freedom, they'll hate us. But we're never, ever going to relinquish our love of freedom in America.

Let me tell you something else about the enemy: They're resourceful; they're slippery; they're the ones who hide in caves and send youngsters to their suicidal death. These are folks that have hijacked a great religion and then take innocent life. And that's a huge difference between America. See, in America we value life. Everybody matters. Every person counts, not only in America but around the world. Human life is precious to the American people, part of our culture. The enemy doesn't think that way. And therefore, we've got to do everything we can to defend against them, to make sure they never hurt us again.

And a lot of good people are working a lot of long hours to protect the American people—just are—you've got to know it. You've got to know that we're doing a better job now of coordinating between agencies in Washington. I mean—once we've learned that oceans no longer protect us—there's a new mentality in your Nation's Capital as well as your statehouse and at the local level as well. A lot of good people are sharing information, are running down leads. Anytime we get a hint something might be happening to America, we're going to react to it. We owe that to the American people. We will do so and protect the United States Constitution at the same time.

We're making progress at home, but we need to make more progress. And one way to do so is to create a Department of Homeland Security. I remember when I first made the announcement, somebody said, "Well, all that's going to mean is bigger Government." I readily concede I didn't campaign on the slogan: "Vote for me. I want your Government to be bigger." But I do want it to work. I want it to perform. There's over 100 agencies involved in the homeland defense. And if the number one priority is to protect the

homeland, it seems like, to me, it makes sense to have them under one umbrella so that we can have a new culture in those agencies. It's not to say they won't do other functions, but we want them focused on your job, on your security, and on their job. That's what we want in America.

And so I've asked Congress to respond. And the House acted quickly, and I appreciate the votes of the Members here from the House. The Senate is bogged down right now. They're bogged down over a dispute as to how best to run the agency. I want to thank Senator Campbell's strong support of my position, which I'm about to share with you. And it's this: I don't need a giant—and when I say "I," it's not only me, it's other Presidents—don't need a thick book of regulations trying to micro-manage the Department of Homeland Security. That's not what we need. We need flexibility. We need to be able to move quickly. We need to be able—need to put the hard-working people in the right place at the right time, to protect us from an enemy. Let me give you some examples of what I'm talking about.

After September the 11th, the Customs Service wanted to require inspectors at the Nation's 301 ports of entry to wear radiation detection devices. That makes sense: Put a radiation detection device on that will help to determine whether or not somebody is trying to smuggle a weapons of mass destruction in the country—eminent sense, logic that folks should want to do that. The union that represents the Customs workers objected. They didn't think that was right. They sought to invoke collective bargaining, which would have taken at least a year to resolve. We don't have a year to resolve issues like that. See, we need to be able to move quickly. We need to be able to respond. It's our job. In order to locate employees in cases of emergency, the Customs Service thought to have employees provide their home addresses or their telephone numbers to the Customs Service—in other words, if there needed

to be a quick response, we needed to have their numbers available. The union objected. They said such a request would violate the privacy rights of workers.

We're in a different time here in America. In this case, a union filed a grievance and sought to negotiate something as sensible as this request. I'm for workers' rights. I believe people ought to be able to have collective bargaining if that's what they want. But in the name of national security, this administration, future administrations need this flexibility to put people—the right place at the right time, in order to protect America from an enemy which still wants to hurt us.

Hope we can get it right in the Senate—an opportunity for the Senate, House to leave behind a legacy that America is more fully protected as time goes on. But the best way to protect America, short term and long term, is to hunt the killers down, one at a time, and to bring them to justice. And that's what we're doing. We're doing it in a variety of ways. First, you just need to know the doctrine that says, if you're—you're either with us, or you're with them—it still stands.

There's a lot of people still with us. This is a different kind of war, and we need people with us. As I mentioned, these are folks that like to hide in caves or the dark recesses of cities around the world. They don't have tanks. They don't have airplanes. They don't have ships. We don't measure success based upon our capacity to destroy their ability to fight war. We measure success based upon how many we have hauled in or how many weren't so lucky. We've gotten over a couple of thousand of them so far. "We" not only means the United States but others with whom we work. And a like number have not been as lucky. We're slowly but surely dismantling the Al Qaida terrorist network.

It's not a very glamorous war for some to cover. It's hard to get breathless over an arrest. Bin al-Shibh popped his head up. He was the guy that thought he was

going to be the 20th hijacker, or wanted to be. He's no longer a threat. He's no longer a threat to America. He's no longer a threat to our friends. It doesn't matter how long it takes, folks, the enemy has got to understand: we're going to get them. It doesn't matter how long it takes; we're going to pursue them. You see, we're fighting for our freedom. We're fighting for that which we hold dear.

I sent up to Congress the largest increase in defense spending since Ronald Reagan was the President. I did it for two reasons. One, anytime we commit our troops into harm's way, they deserve the best pay, the best equipment, and the best possible training. We owe that to our troops, and we owe it to their loved ones as well. And for those of you in the audience who have got a loved one in the military—one, proud of your son or daughter; two, I have got full confidence in your son or daughter; and three, thank you for your sacrifice. And secondly, the reason I asked for a increase the size of which I did is because I wanted to send a message to friend and foe alike that when it comes to the defense of our freedoms, we're not quitting. There's no calendar on my desk that says, well, we've reached this time; it's time to stop. That's not how I think. That's not how America thinks. We want our friends understanding that. We want the enemy to know it as well, that when it comes to the defense of our country, comes to defending the values we hold dear, it doesn't matter how much it costs; it doesn't matter how long it takes: The United States will be firm and resolved. We owe that to our children, and we owe it to our children's children.

I've got a problem, however. The defense budget I submitted hasn't made it to my desk yet. Here we are trying to defend the homeland, and it's stuck. The House passed it. The Senate passed it. Now it's time for the leadership in Washington, DC, to get the defense bill to my desk before they go home. It's important for—it's an important signal to send. And they

ought to stop playing politics with defense appropriations at this time in American history.

There's not going to be an easy road to secure our freedom. There is going to be—there are some steep hills to climb. But we're ready to climb them as a nation, I think. There's a steep hill to climb in Iraq. I went to the United Nations the other day, and I want to share with you why I went. First, I wanted to make sure the world heard the case: This man is a dictator who tortures and rapes women—has women raped in order to make a point; who kills, stifles dissent through murder; the man who said he would get rid of weapons of mass destruction and still has them. And we need to fear the fact that he has weapons of mass destruction. He's used them before. He's used them on his own people before. He's invaded two countries. He's lied and deceived the world.

The United States is no longer secure because we've got oceans. We're vulnerable to attack, as we learned so vividly. My job is to not only deal with problems—people kind of run around and lurk—my job is also to anticipate problems. My job is to be realistic about our future. My job is to make sure that the world's worst leader is not able to blackmail or hurt America or our friends and allies with the world's worst weapons. We've got to make sure that these dictators aren't able to team up with terrorist groups, use their weapons of mass destruction as a way to intimidate those of us who love freedom.

So I went to the United Nations. My message was, "We want you to succeed as an organization. We remember what it was like when the collective body was the League of Nations, unable to stop totalitarianism, that in order to secure the freedom in the 21st century, it's important to have an effective body. But you've been ineffective," I said. "For 11 long years you have said one thing to the dictator in Iraq, and he has thumbed his nose. For 11 years you've allowed this man to be—to lie and

deceive about weapons of mass destruction, and you have not held him to account. And now is the time. For the sake of freedom, you have got a choice: You can hold him to account. And for the sake of freedom, he has got a choice: He can disarm."

There's no negotiations, by the way, for Mr. Saddam Hussein. There's nothing to discuss. He either gets rid of his weapons and the United Nations gets rid of his weapons—he can either get rid of his weapons and the United Nations can act, or the United States will lead a coalition to disarm this man.

I'm willing to give peace a chance to work. I want the United Nations to work. I want him to do what he said he would do. But for the sake of our future, now's the time—now's the time. For the sake of your children's future, we must make sure this madman never has the capacity to hurt us with a nuclear weapon or to use the stockpiles of anthrax that we know he has, or VX—the biological weapons which he possesses.

I appreciate both Republicans and Democrats in our country understanding this issue. The other day I was at—greeted in the Cabinet Room members of both parties from the United States Congress, both parties, who understand the stakes—members of both parties who understand the stakes, people who are willing to work with us to send a clear message to the world, a unified message, a strong resolution which defines our vision for peace.

Soon I'll have a—soon you'll see a resolution come forth supported by members of both parties—not everybody, I can understand that. This is an important debate, a debate where people will speak their conscience. I'm absolutely convinced as we've laid out the facts, members from both parties understand the stakes, understand we're talking about freedom, and understand we cannot allow this madman to threaten us, to threaten others, to threaten our friends with the world's worst weapons.

I want you to know that behind the rhetoric of war is a deep desire for peace, that I believe that by remaining strong and diligent that we can achieve peace, that we can achieve peace not only for America but peace around the world. I believe that by speaking clearly about terror, delineating good from evil, remaining forceful in our desire for freedom, we can achieve peace in the Middle East.

I laid out a vision for peace. I'm going to stay on that vision. I believe so strongly it's possible. And I believe we can achieve peace in South Asia. I want you to tell your kids that when they hear the debate, listen to the rhetoric: This administration has got a deep desire for a peaceful world. I also have a deep desire for a better world, too, a better country.

As we work to keep the peace we've also got to work to make America a better place for all of us. I mean every single citizen. That means we've got to have an education system that is next to none. I believe strongly in setting high standards and challenging the soft bigotry of low expectations. I believe every child can learn.

I know Bob shares that vision, and I know the Governor does as well. I'm proud to sign an important piece of education reform—for the first time said that if you receive Federal money, why don't you show us whether or not your children are learning to read and write and add and subtract? See, if you believe every child can learn, if you're willing to challenge the soft bigotry of low expectations, then just show us. And if they are, we'll praise the teachers and praise the superintendents. But when we find our children trapped in schools that won't teach and won't change, we must demand something different. No child should be left behind in America.

A better America is one that has got a modern health care system. And I look forward to working with Bob to make sure that the Medicare system is modern. Medicine has changed; Medicare hasn't. And it's time to keep the promise of Medicare with

a modern system, starting with prescription drug benefits for our seniors.

And by the way, I appreciated what the House did. I call upon the Senate to do the same thing that the House did the other day. In order to make sure medicine is affordable and accessible, we need medical liability reform at the Federal level. Let me just put it to you this way: Too many lawsuits are driving docs out of business. Too many lawsuits are making health care hard to get for a lot of folks. Too many lawsuits, too many frivolous and junk lawsuits are driving up your cost for health care, and we need to do something about it, starting at the Federal level. The House acted. The Senate must show the same kind of courage, for the sake of the American people.

There's a lot of things we can do in Washington, but the best way to make America a better place is to call upon our fellow citizens to love a neighbor just like you'd like to be loved yourself. See, Government can hand out money—sometimes we do a pretty good job of it—but what it cannot do is cause people to love one another. It can't put hope in people's hearts or a sense of purpose in people's lives. That is done when a fellow citizen puts his arm around somebody who hurts, and says, "I love you." That's how that happens. That's done when a church or a synagogue or mosque decides to feed the hungry or find shelter for those who have no housing. It's done when somebody mentors a child. It's done when somebody runs a Boy Scout or Girl Scout troop. That's what happens, see.

That's the true strength of the country, by the way. The true strength of the country is in the hearts and souls of our fellow citizens. You know, people have asked me, what can they do to help in the war against terror? My answer is, love a neighbor. If you want to fight evil, do some good. Try to make your community a better place in which somebody can live and realize their dreams.

No, the enemy hit us—the enemy hit us. They didn’t know who they were hitting. They probably thought after 9/11/2001 that maybe a couple lawsuits would be filed against them. They didn’t understand America. They didn’t understand our view of freedom; nor did they understand that this great Nation would rise up—this Nation would take a step back and assess what was important and rise up. A lot of people now understand to be a patriot means more than just putting your hand over your heart. It means doing something to make your community a better place. A true patriot is somebody who helps eliminate those pockets of despair and hopelessness by loving somebody.

I believe out of the evil done to America is going to come great good—still mourn the loss of life, like we all do, but I know the culture is beginning to change from one that has said, “If it feels good, do it,” and “If you’ve got a problem, blame somebody else,” to a day in which each of us understand we’re responsible for the decisions we make in life. We’re responsible for loving our children, if you’re lucky enough to be a mom or a dad. You’re responsible for the quality of life in the community in which you live. You’re responsible for loving your neighbor like you’d like to be—self. If you’re running corporate

America, you’re responsible to tell the truth to your employees and your shareholders.

This great country is responding to the evil done. I’m an optimistic guy, because I believe America can achieve anything it sets its mind to, believe we can achieve peace. And I believe we can help eliminate the pockets of despair and make sure this country remains such a beacon of hope for everybody, for every citizen who is fortunate enough to live in this great land.

The reason I believe that way is, I understand that America is the greatest nation, full of the finest people, on the face of our Earth. God bless you all, and may God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:26 a.m. in the Plaza Ballroom at the Adam’s Mark Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to candidate Bob Beauprez’s wife, Claudia, and his parents, Joe and Maria Beauprez; Bob Benson, chair, Republican Party of Colorado; Gov. Bill Owens of Colorado, and his wife, Frances; former Senator William L. Armstrong of Colorado; Ramzi bin al-Shibh, an Al Qaida operative suspected of helping to plan the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, who was captured in Karachi, Pakistan; and President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. Bob Beauprez was a candidate for Colorado’s Seventh Congressional District.

Remarks at a Rally for Congressional Candidate Rick Renzi in Flagstaff, Arizona

September 27, 2002

The President. Thank you all for coming. It’s such an honor to be here. Well, we’re working on the drought. [*Laughter*] I love the rain. Thanks for standing out here. It’s such an honor to be here. I appreciate you all enduring the weather.

It is my honor to be here for the next Congressman from this district, Rick Renzi. He’s a good fellow. He’s a good man. He

believes in family values. After all, he’s got 12 kids. I want to thank Roberta for standing by him as he takes his message to the people, that he works hard to let the people know what’s in his heart. And he’s a good-hearted man. He cares deeply about the people of this district. I’m here to endorse his candidacy because I think he’ll be the